dhrm | Utah Department of Human Resource Management

Law Enforcement Recruitment / Retention

September 20, 2017

Recruitment / Retention of Law Enforcement

We were asked to give information related to the recruitment and retention of law enforcement positions. Due to the general nature of this request, some effort was made to interpret what was intended. Therefore, this presentation provides information on the following:

- National and local trends in recruitment and retention of law enforcement classifications
- Status of recruitment and retention of law enforcement in the State of Utah as informed by DHRM data

Trends in Recruitment and Retention

A legitimate evaluation of national or regional recruitment / retention trends in law enforcement classifications was not possible by the date of this committee meeting due to the research and analysis required.

The context of these trends, however, was recently summarized by **The Economist**

- A strong economy reduces a willingness to enter dangerous professions
- A perception of increased danger associated with policing
- The image of policing and backlash because of it has made the profession less appealing

"The Force is Weak," January 2017

Law Enforcement Recruitment / Retention in Utah

This presentation seeks to provide an understanding of the status of recruitment and retention of law enforcement positions in the State of Utah using DHRM data. Available data was analyzed for the following classifications:

Corrections

- Officer (entry) / Sergeant / Lieutenant / Captain
- Adult Probation and Parole Officer (entry) / Supervisor

Public Safety

- Highway Patrol Officer (entry) / Sergeant / Lieutenant / Captain

Retention Indicators

Retention can be understood by evaluating turnover rates and tenure. Retention can be understood on at least three levels: at a position level, at an agency level, and at an enterprise level.

While turnover always represents a pain point at a position level, turnover at an agency level or enterprise level (meaning the turnover is caused by promotion within the State of Utah) can be viewed as a positive form of big picture turnover.

The following data analysis has limitations associated with scope, time, and capacity.
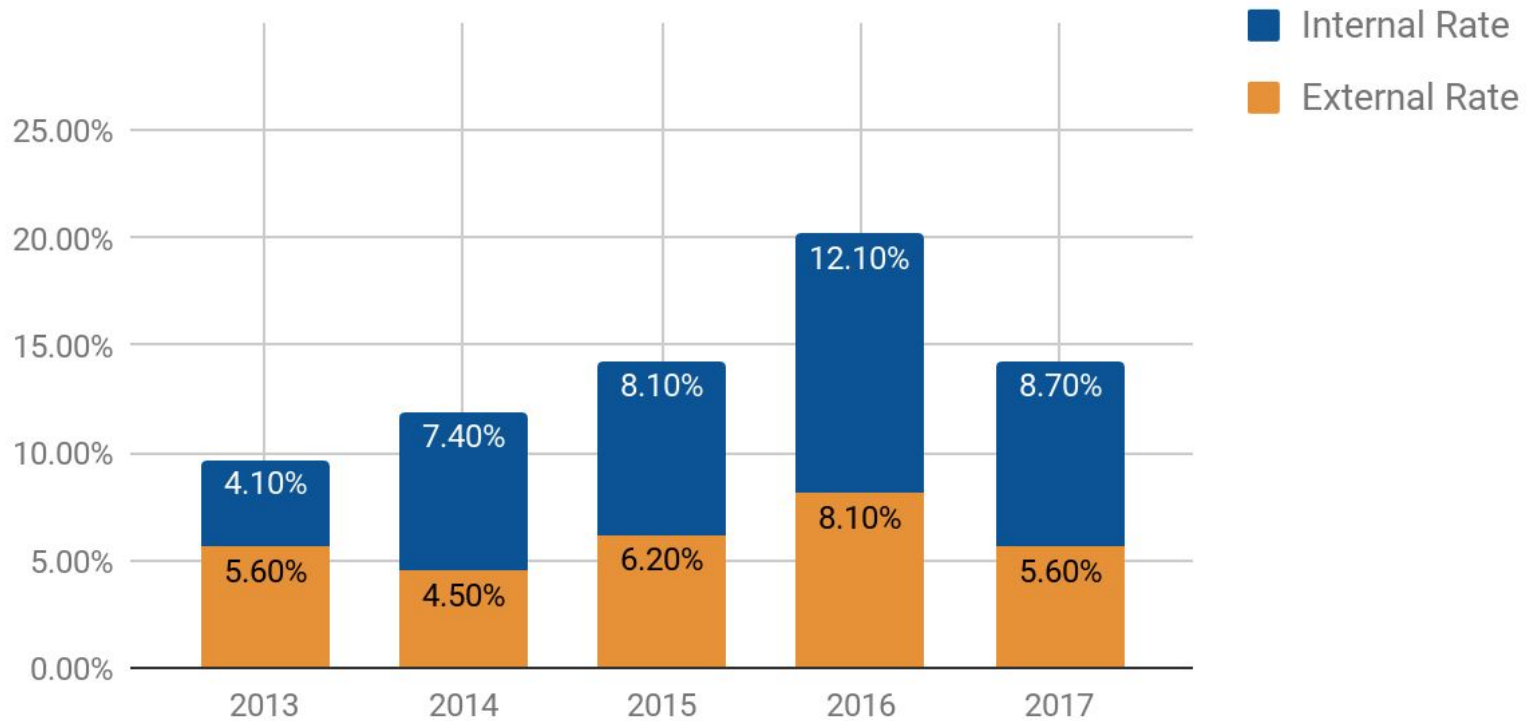
Turnover (In Terms of Leaving Agency)
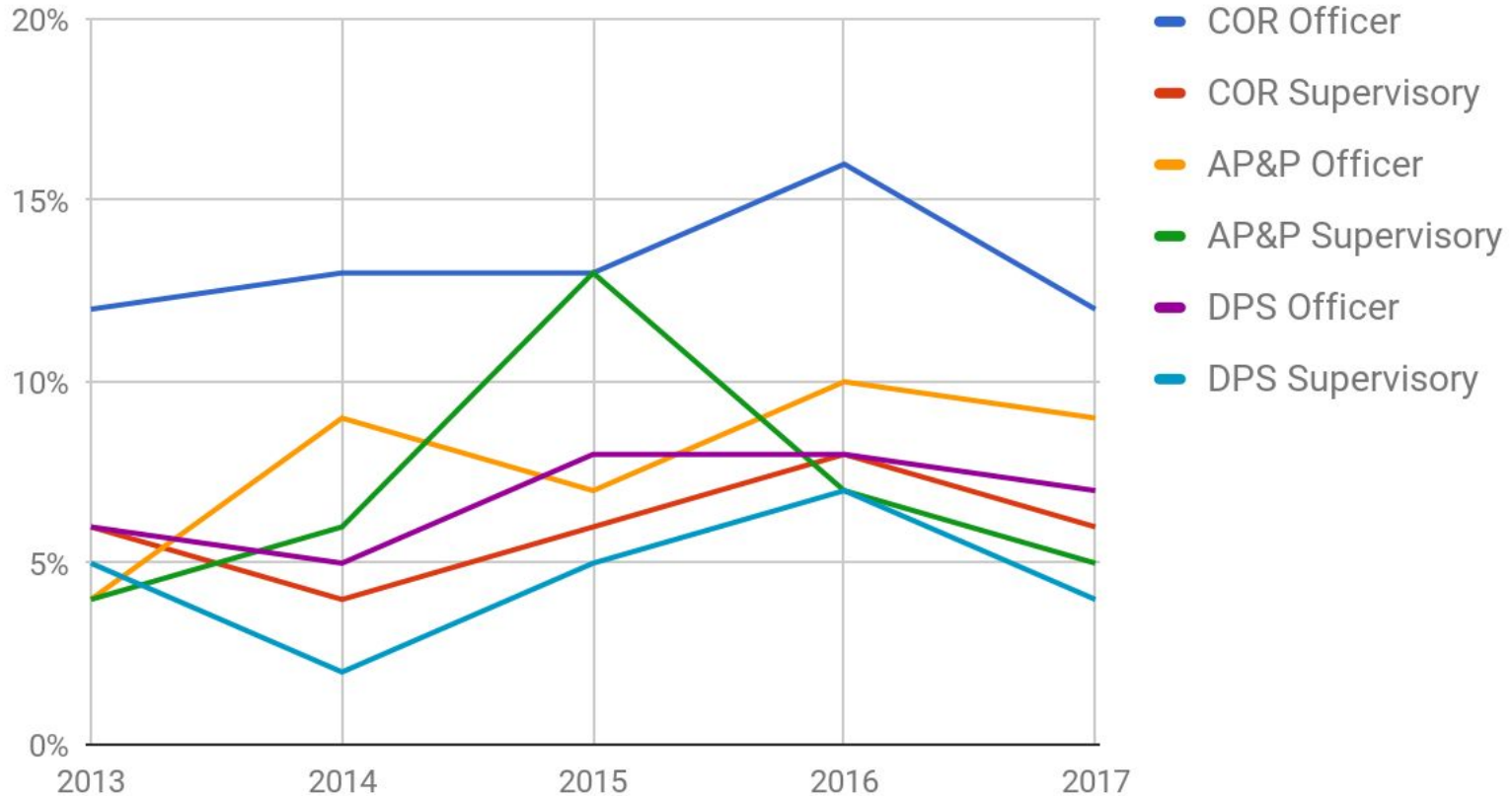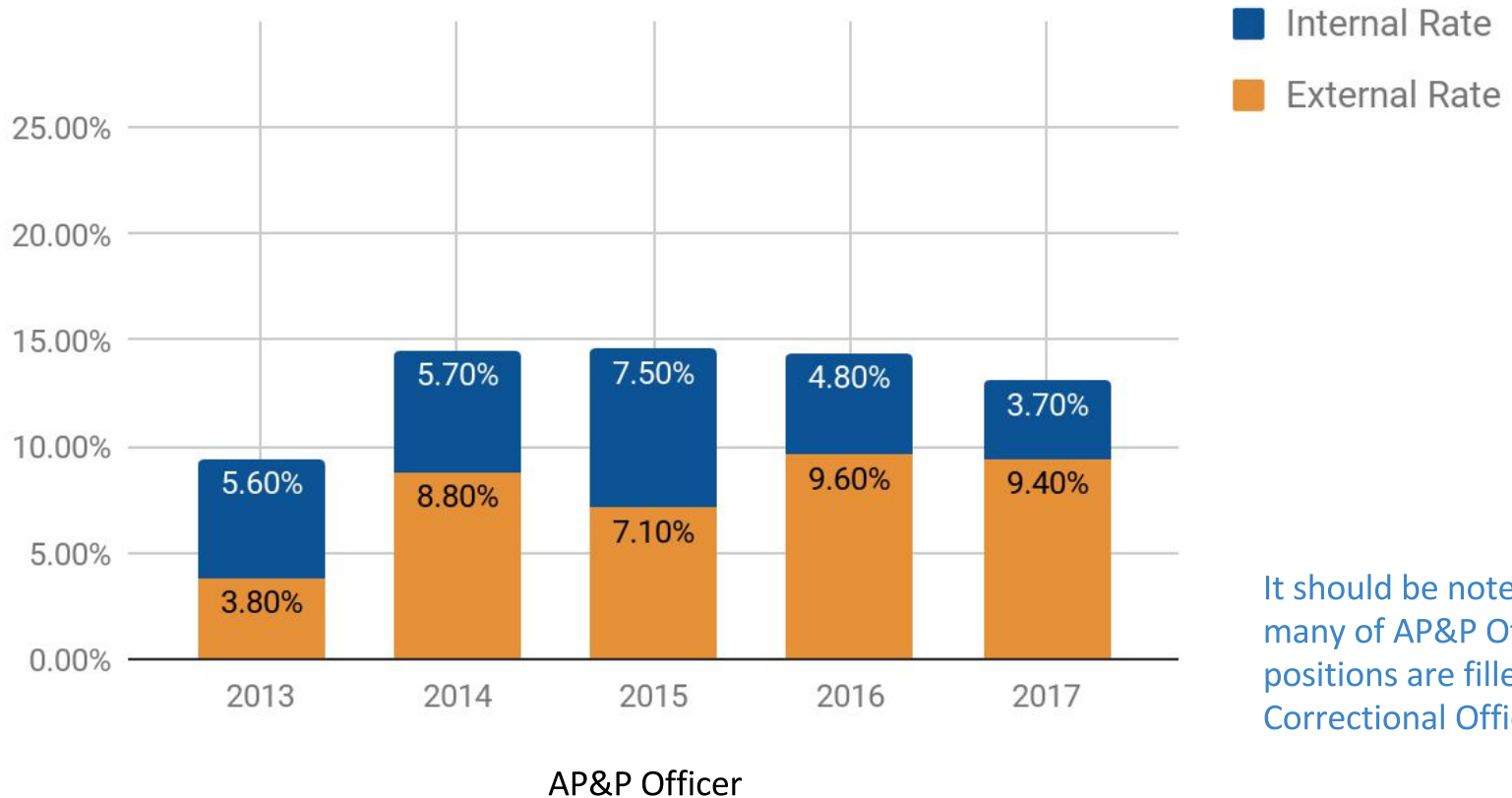
Turnover (Internal vs. External Rate)
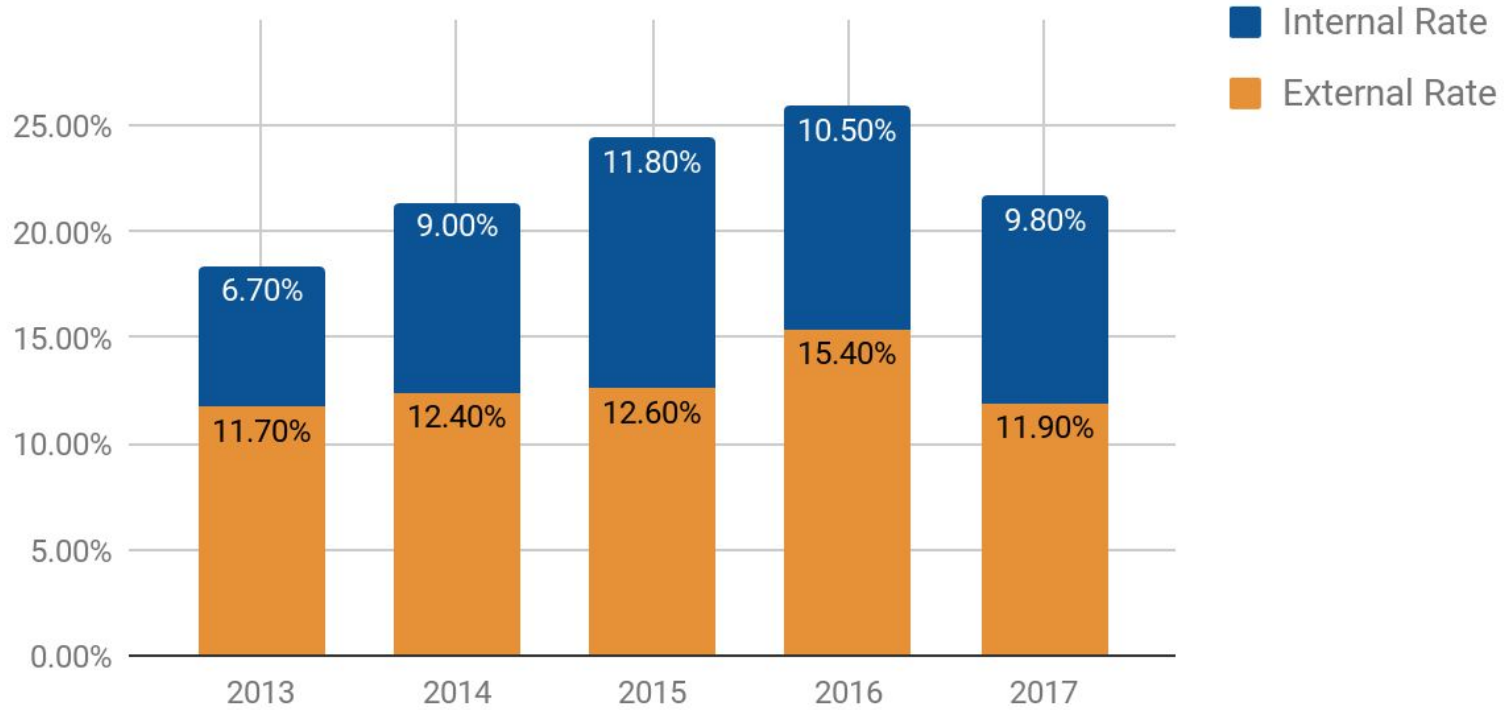
Correctional Officer

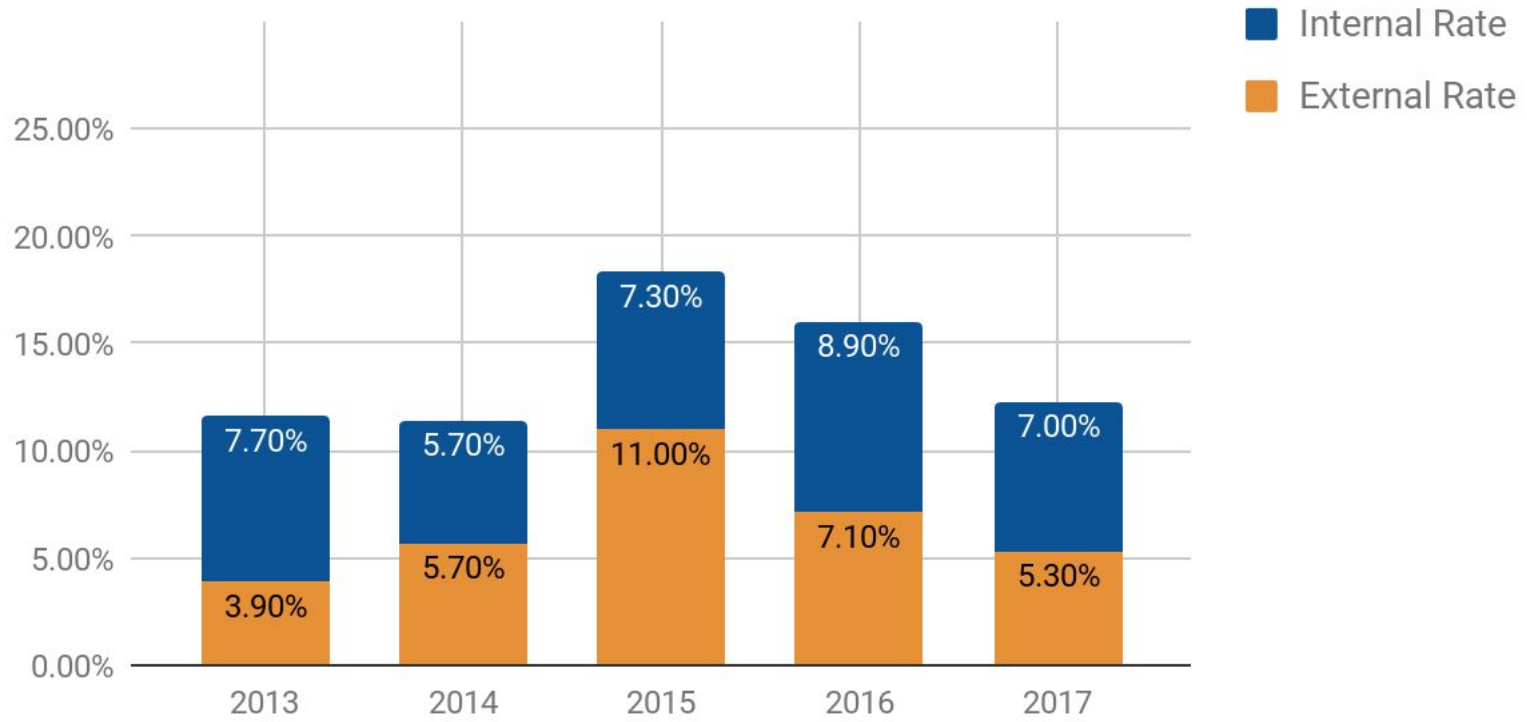# Turnover (Internal vs. External Rate)

Correctional Supervisory
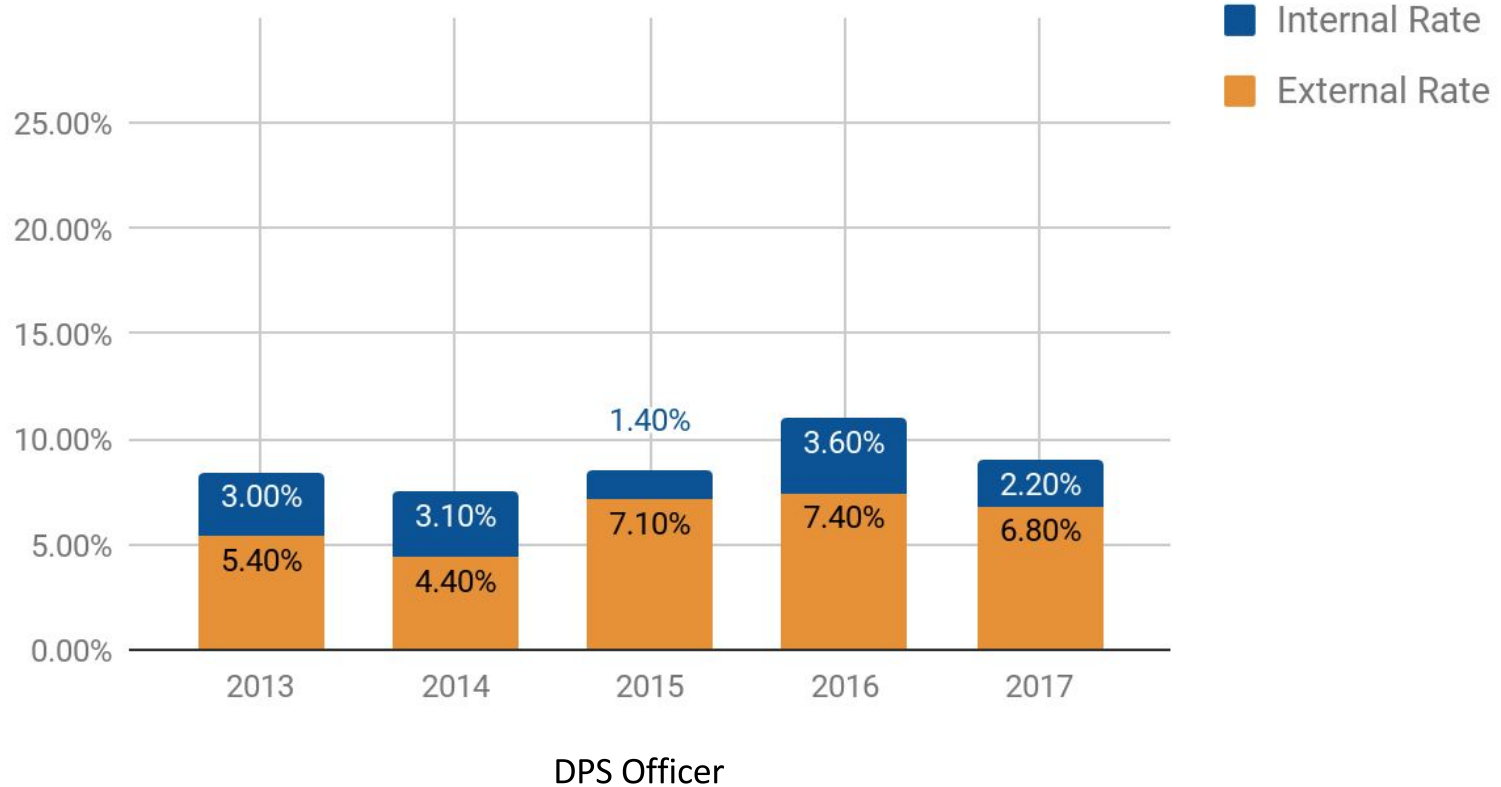
Turnover (Internal vs. External Rate)

It should be noted that many of AP&P Officer positions are filled by Correctional Officers.

Turnover (Internal vs. External Rate)
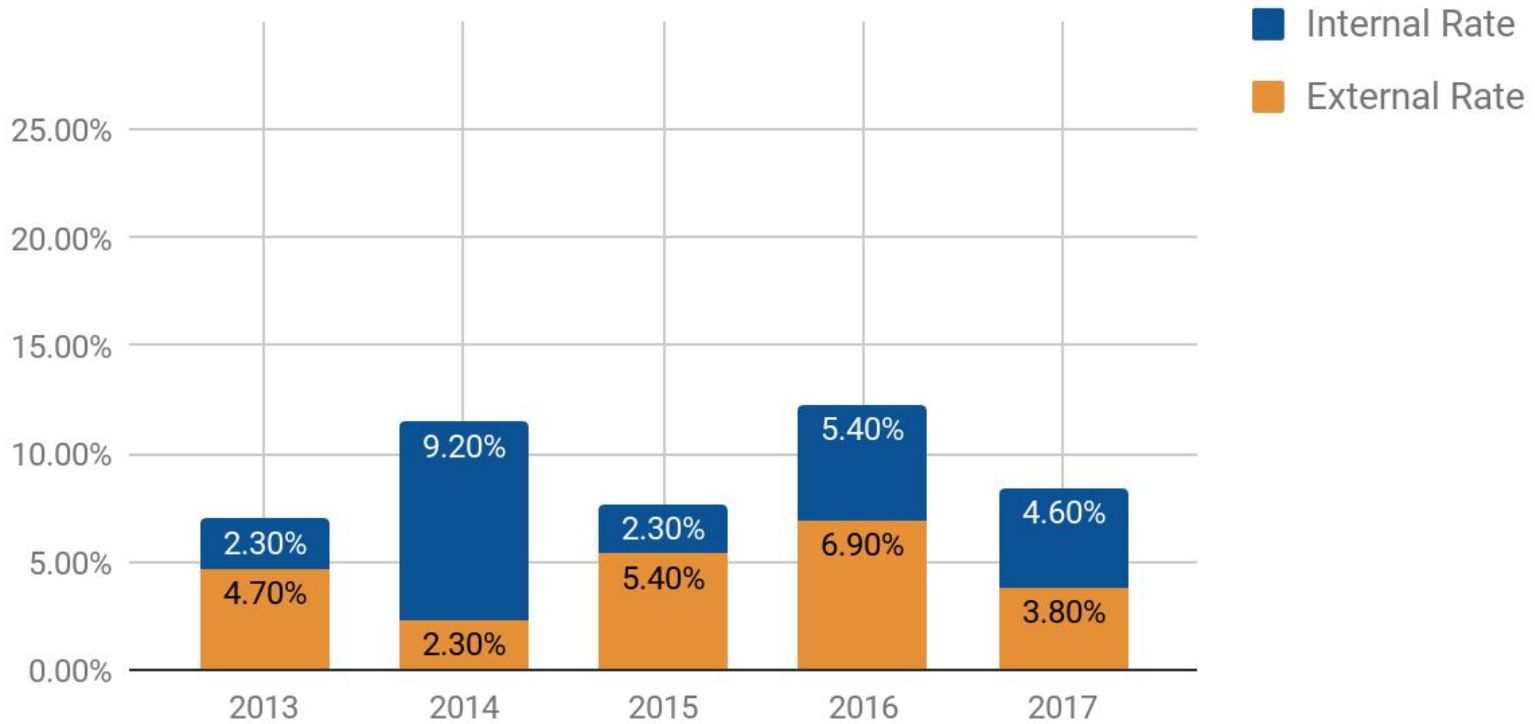

AP&P Supervisor

Turnover (Internal vs. External Rate)
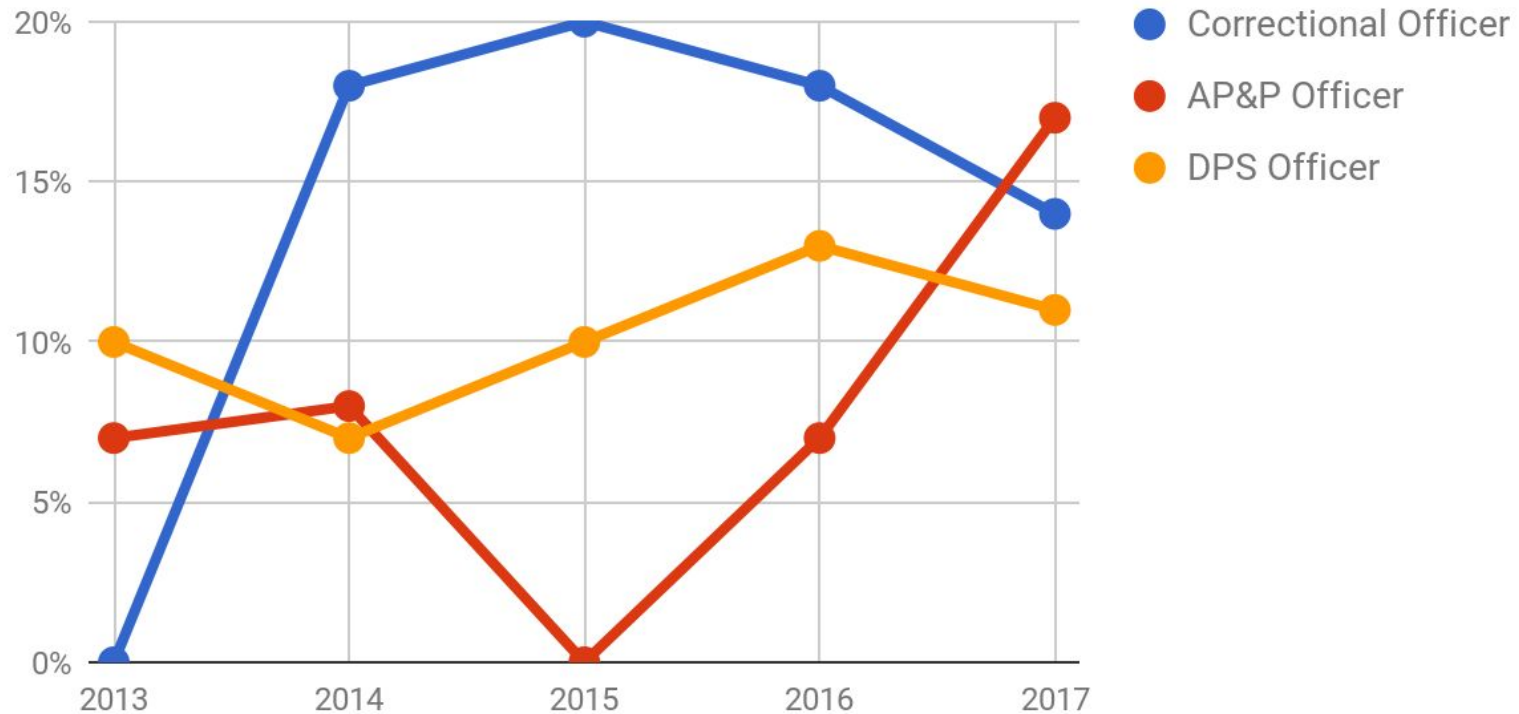

DPS Officer

Turnover (Internal vs. External Rate)

DPS Supervisory

Churn Rates at Officer Positions

Officer Churn Rates (Turnover among those employed <5 Years)

- Correctional Officer
- AP&P Officer
- DPS Officer

Time in Position v. Tenure

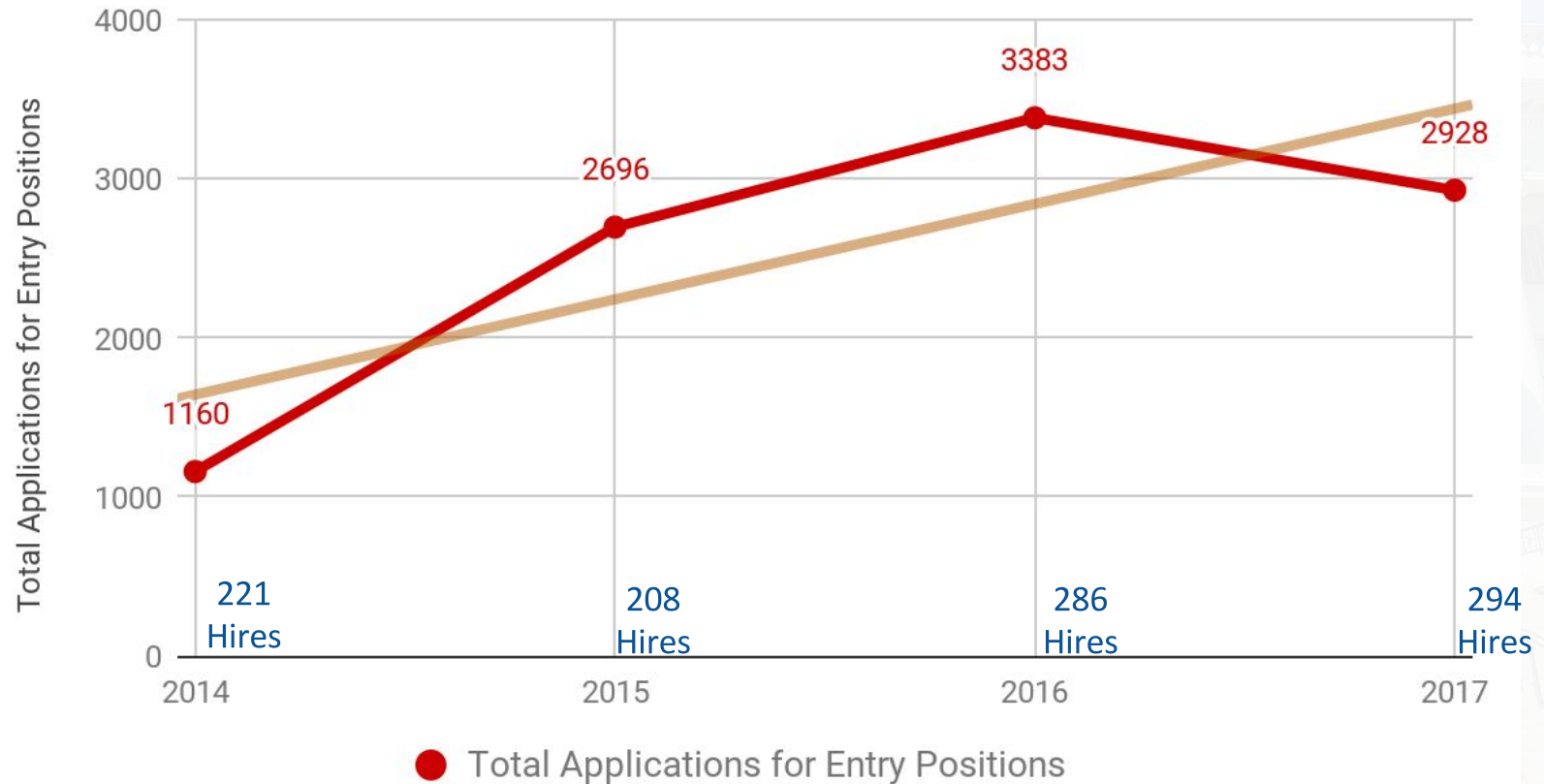| JobID	Years in Position	Years in Agency
COR Off	2.9	4.3
COR Sgt	4.1	14.4
COR Lt	4.9	15.7
COR Cpt	3.7	12.0
AP&P Off	4.5	10.2
AP&P Sup	3.5	14.0
DPS Off	4.6	6.8
DPS Lt	3.8	14.9
DPS Sgt	4.1	13.0
DPS Cpt	3.9	16.4

Recruitment Indicators

Recruitment indicators can help leaders understand how well an organization is postured to compete in the labor market for targeted human capital.
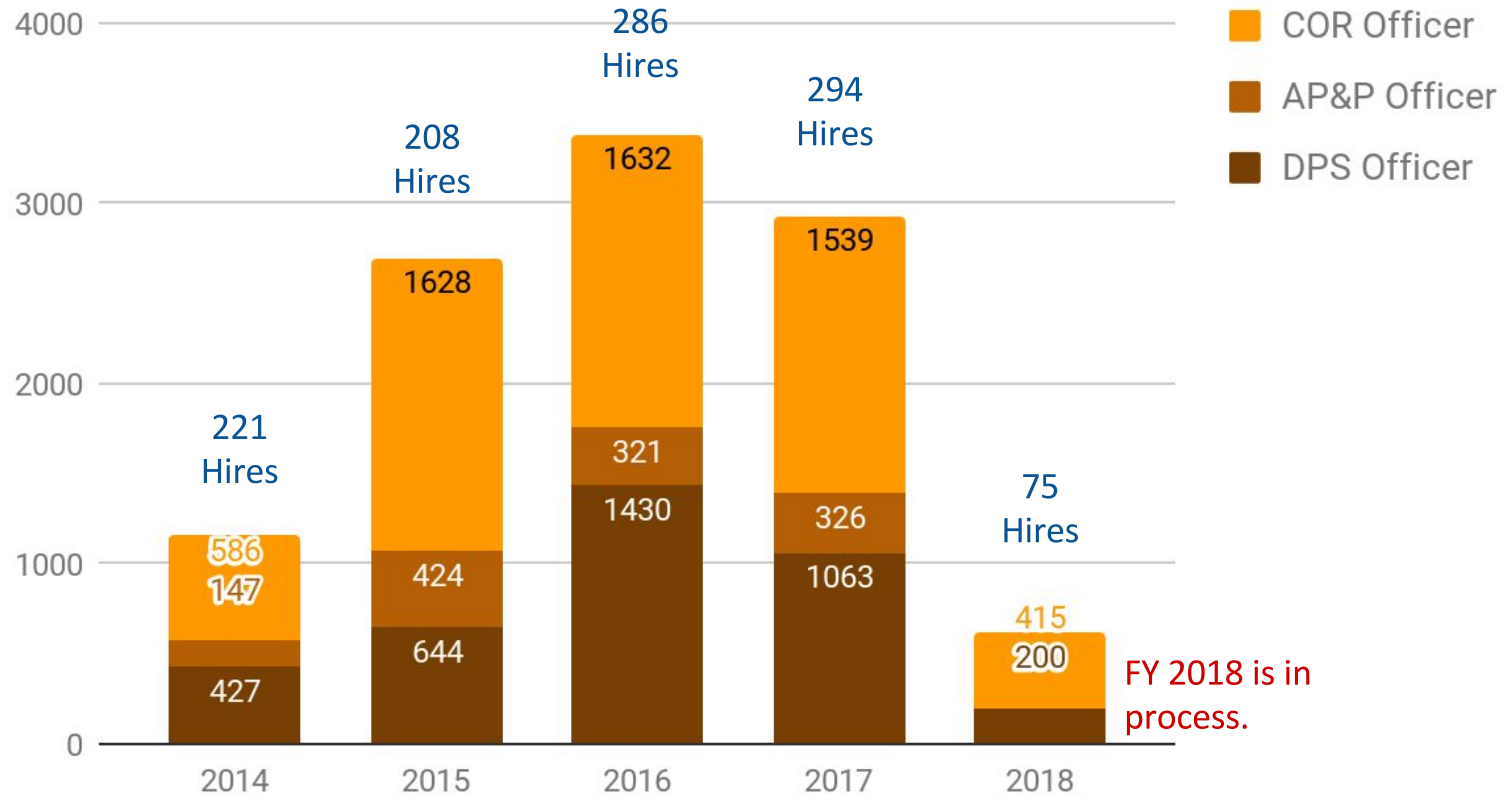
There are several structural limitations in the data for these recruitment indicators. These limitations are predominantly produced by the distinctive recruitment processes used for these classifications. Further, an analysis of vacancies can be complicated.

Thus, this analysis acknowledges a more precise and useful evaluation of recruitment trends for these classifications will require a significant investment of time and capacity.

Total Applications for All Three Entry Positions

Applications Per Year (By Entry Position)

Legend:
- COR Officer
- AP&P Officer
- DPS Officer

2014 — 221 Hires: 586, 147, 427

2015 — 208 Hires: 1628, 424, 644

2016 — 286 Hires: 1632, 321, 1430

2017 — 294 Hires: 1539, 326, 1063

2018 — 75 Hires: 415, 200

FY 2018 is in process.

Recruitment Indicators

Time to fill positions can inform recruitment trends when it can be inferred that a recruitment remains open because an organization is struggling to find qualified applicants in the labor market.

In the State of Utah, law enforcement recruitments require more time to fill due to screenings, tests, and evaluations (in contrast to a standard recruitment).   This renders some limitation on using time to fill as an indicator of the sufficiency of the labor market.

It may be worth evaluating the extent to which the time associated with completing a recruitment has a negative impact on filling vacancies with qualified candidates who may withdraw for a variety of reasons during that time frame.

General Recruitment Process (Law Enforcement v. Non)

Generalized Standard Recruitment Process (Corrections Non Law Enforcement)

Application → Interview → Placement

Generalized Correctional Officer Recruitment Process

Application → Physical Test → Other Tests (Medical, Drug etc.) → Investigation → Interview → Placement
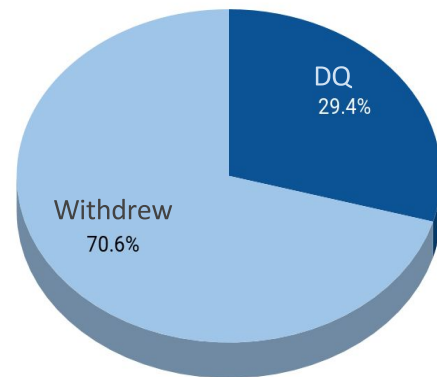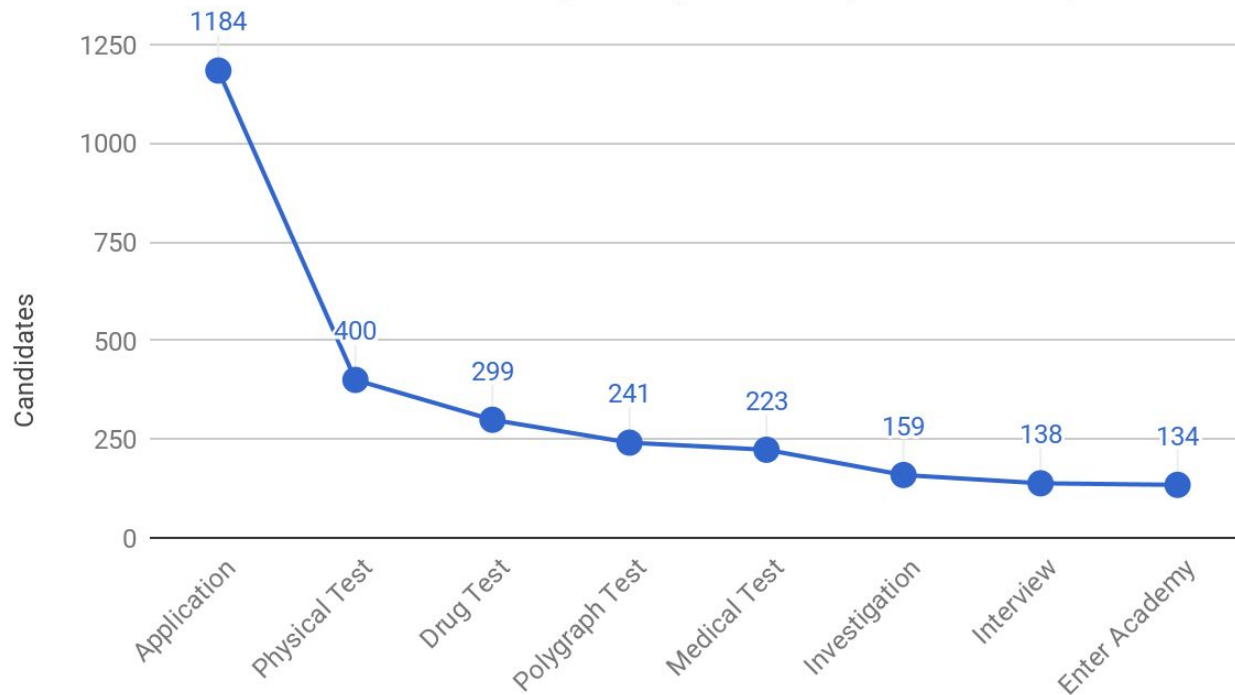
Days from posting close to start date (Corrections):

129

Days

Recruitment Indicators

Correctional Officer Attrition Rates (January 2017 - September 2017)

Summary

- Turnover trended downward from FY 2016 to FY 2017
- Further evaluation will be required to understand the degree to which law enforcement turnover and retention rates in the State of Utah are outside the noise of general industry trends (focusing on external turnover rates)
- It appears that the labor market provides sufficient applications for law enforcement positions
- The extent to which the labor market is rendering desirable applicants for employment will require further evaluation due to the unknowns associated with the attrition rate of applicants within the recruitment process